

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):** 2160002
2. **Type of request:** Modification
3. **Statutory citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended
4. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Minnesota
6. **Region:** MWRO
7. **Regulatory requirements:**

Under 7 CFR 273.24(b) individuals are not eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a member of any household if the individual received program benefits for more than 3 months during any 3 year period in which the individual was subject to, but did not comply with, the SNAP work requirements. Regulations at 273.24(a) provide that fulfilling the work requirement means: working 20 hours or more per week, averaged monthly; participating in and complying with the requirements of a work program or a workfare program for at least 20 hours per week; or any combination of working and participating in a work program for a total of 20 hours per week.

Under 7 CFR 273.24(f), upon the request of a State agency, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) may waive the applicability of the time limit described above for any group of individuals in the State if FNS makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals.

8. **Description of alternative procedures:**

The State of Minnesota is requesting to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) in 13 counties and 1 reservation from SNAP time limits at 7 CFR 273.24.

9. **Justification for request:**

Under SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2), areas may qualify for an ABAWD time limit waiver if they have insufficient jobs. To support this claim, states may submit evidence that an area has an average unemployment rate for a 24-month time period that is at least 20 percent above the national average for the same 24-month period. 7 CFR 273.24(f)(6) provides that States may define areas to be waived.

The State of Minnesota seeks a waiver for one individual county based on its average unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of June 2014 through May 2016. The national average unemployment rate for this 24-month period was 5.5 percent; 20 percent above this was 6.5 percent. The average unemployment rate for the county was 6.8 percent.

June 2014 – May 2016			
Town	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total	Unemployment Rate
Marshall County, MN	9,333	137,678	6.8%
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.5%		

Minnesota also seeks a waiver for a region of 12 contiguous counties based on its average unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of June 2014 through May 2016. The region's unemployment rate was 6.6 percent for the same time period.

May 2014 – April 2016		
County	Total Unemployed	Total Labor Force
Aitkin County, MN	10,062	163,839
Cass County, MN	22,778	337,861
Clearwater County, MN	10,634	111,728
Hubbard County, MN	14,170	229,511
Itasca County, MN	36,855	543,086
Kanabec County, MN	14,739	212,526
Koochiching County, MN	12,345	151,716
Lake of the Woods County, MN	2,648	58,805
Mahnomen County, MN	3,111	58,115
Mille Lacs County, MN	18,398	308,163
Norman County, MN	3,904	81,924
Wadena County, MN	9,025	151,901
Total for Region	158,669	2,409,175
Combined Region Unemployment Rate	6.6%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.5%	

The state of Minnesota requests to waive the following reservation based on having an average unemployment rate exceeding the national average for a recent 24-month period. The reservation unemployment rate was calculated by applying 2014 American Community Survey¹ share ratios to county-level Bureau of Labor Statistics data from June 2014 – May 2016. The following table summarizes the calculations:

June 2014 through May 2016			
Reservation	Unemployed	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate

¹ These calculations are based on data from the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Scott County (part); Minnesota (part); Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community and Off-Reservation Trust Land, MN	176	1,942	9.1%
Total Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Reservation	176	1,942	9.1%

10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:

This waiver will provide consistency for households and the State of Minnesota agency operations in areas where unemployment remains higher than the national average.

11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):

The caseload for these areas, as of 7/18/2016 is 11,659 cases, which represents 7% of the SNAP caseload for Minnesota. There are no quality control procedures involved.

12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:

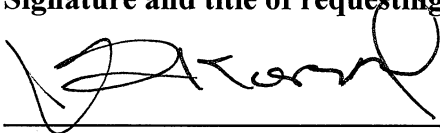
Minnesota is requesting a one-year waiver, from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

13. Proposed quality control review procedures:

There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.

14. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:

15. Signature and title of requesting official:



Title: Assistant Commissioner Children and Family Services
Email for transmission of response: jim.koppel@state.mn.us

16. Date of request: July 19, 2016

17. State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone): Karen Nelsen-Huss SNAP Program Consultant – 651-431-4027; karen.nelsen-huss@state.mn.us or Steve Erbes SNAP E&T Program Coordinator – 651-259-7539; steve.erbes@state.mn.us

18. Regional office contact person (to be completed by FNS regional office):

